

***Report to the Governor
and the General Assembly on the
Financial Status of the Lighthouse
Preservation Special Fund***

2002

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Background

The Maryland Lighthouse Commission was created by the General Assembly in 1989 (Chapter 642, 1989 Laws of Maryland). The Lighthouse Preservation Special Fund was created in 1992 (Chapter 309, 1992 Laws of Maryland) and funded primarily by private gifts and donations. The statute creating the Commission was repealed in 1996, however the Fund was continued in order to fund outstanding lighthouse preservation efforts. The balance of the Lighthouse Preservation Special Fund, including interest earned, totaled \$17,029.98.

In 1995, Governor Schaefer reserved \$150,000 of the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) Historic Preservation Grant Fund specifically for lighthouse projects. This funding for lighthouses was a one-time set-aside, separate from the Lighthouse Preservation Special Fund.

Grant expenditures for Maryland Lighthouse projects dating from 1988 through 1997 were previously documented in a report submitted by Orlando Ridout V, Chief of the MHT Office of Survey, Research, and Development, on July 11, 1997 to the Honorable W. Ray Huff, former Chair of the Maryland Lighthouse Commission and lighthouse preservation advisor appointed by the DCHD Secretary under the statute establishing the Fund. Projects dating from 1998 through 2001 were documented in a report entitled "Financial Status of the Lighthouse Preservation Special Fund, FY95-FY01" that was submitted to the Governor and the General Assembly in 2001.

Activities During Calendar Year 2002

In 2002, funds remaining in the Lighthouse Preservation Special Fund account were expended through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Maryland Office of Tourism Development (MOTD) to assist in the creation of a travel itinerary booklet entitled "By the Light of the Bay, The Chesapeake and Its Beacons," featuring Maryland lighthouses of the Chesapeake Bay. Throughout 2002, the MOTD has been distributing the booklet both nationally and internationally, targeting both individual and group travelers. Local distribution outlets include visitor information and welcome centers throughout Maryland. MOTD has incorporated the booklet into an overall marketing program which includes advertising, trade shows, travel shows, and media familiarization trips.

Also during 2002, the Maryland Historical Trust website was expanded to add a new web page including "Maryland Lighthouse" content as a "Heritage Tourism" category. This new web page provides an overview of the history of Maryland lighthouses and chronicles the history of the Maryland Lighthouse Commission. The site includes links to lighthouse affinity organizations nationwide, including the National Park Service National Maritime Initiative and the Chesapeake Chapter of the U.S. Lighthouse Society.

Conclusion

The Lighthouse Preservation Special Fund is now depleted. Nonetheless, the Fund continues in existence until the statute creating it (Article 83B, Section 5-614.1) is repealed. The Governor and General Assembly may either act to add funds to the Special Fund or repeal the statute creating the Fund.